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STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
AND ADDICTION SERVICES
A HEALTHCARE SERVICE AGENCY

PATRICIA A. REHMER, MSN
COMMISSIONER

Memorandum:

To: Members of the Appropriations, Housing and Human Services Committee

From: Commissioner Patricia Rehmer, DMHAS

Date: January 29, 2013

Subject: Interagency Council on Affordable Housing Report and Recommendations.

Sen. Harp, Rep. Walker, Sen. Ayala, Rep. Butler, Sen. Bartolomeo, Rep. Abercrombie and distinguished members of the Appropriations, Housing and Human Services Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to comment in writing on the Interagency Council on Affordable Housing Report and its recommendations.

The Interagency Council which has been meeting for the last 6 months has presented a comprehensive plan for the new Department of Housing. DMHAS participated in these meetings and worked with other state agencies and stakeholders to insure a smooth transition of housing dollars and programs where appropriate. There are a number of DMHAS programs that will transfer housing subsidies to the new Dept. of Housing; but DMHAS will continue to hold and manage the service dollars which are used to assist the people we serve. These service dollars wrap around the individuals to insure they maintain stability in housing while in recovery.

There are 4 programs in DMHAS that will transfer the dollars used for housing subsidies to the new Dept. of Housing. Those programs are:

- Shelter Plus Care (federal program to provide housing subsidies to homeless individuals with in kind services provided by DMHAS)
- Enhancing Housing Opportunities (provides rental subsidies to 50 individuals with Mental Illness, with services remaining at DMHAS)
- Forensic Supportive Housing (provides rental subsidies to 60 DMHAS clients who have had some involvement in the criminal justice system, with services remaining at DMHAS)
- FUSE (frequent Users of Support Enhancements provides rental subsidies to 20 individuals who have a history of repetitive use of the criminal justice system and the homeless shelter system, with services remaining at DMHAS)

DMHAS is confident that the transfer of these housing dollars will provide for better coordination and communication. We believe that having one central location for all State funded housing programs will allow persons within our system of care to have better access to a variety of available housing options. The new Department will play the lead in the development of a statewide housing policy which will include housing options for special populations, including those who receive services from the DMHAS system. This will expand housing options to a broader range of Connecticut citizens.

We thank you for your time and attention to this matter and urge your support for the recommendations before you.